THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) Central Electricity Authority has identified nine sites for development of coal based Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPP) of about 4000 MW capacity each under tariff based competitive bidding. Bidding process in respect of four projects *i.e.* Sasan in Madhya Pradesh, Mundra in Gujarat, Krishnapatnam in Andhra Pradesh and Tilaiya in Jharkhand has commenced. Letter of Intent has already been issued in respect of Sasan and Mundra L'MPPs. The schedule date of submission of bids in respect of Krishnapatnam UMPP is 10th April, 2007. The date for submission of request for qualification documents in respect of Tilaiya UMPP is 20th March, 2007. Initiating the bidding process in respect of Girye in Maharashtra, Tadri in Karnataka, Akaltara in Chhattisgarh and Orissa UMPP is contingent upon the availability of requisite clearances and confirmation from the respective State Governments. In respect of locating UMPP in Tamil Nadu feasibility of development of related port facilities is the key issue to be addressed by the State Government prior to initiating the bidding process of this project.

(b) and (c) According to information made available by Power Finance Corporation M/s. Globeleq Singapore Pte. Ltd. (GSPL) [Lead member of Globeleq—Lanco Consortium] is still a part of the consortium in case of Sasan UMPP.

Overseas projects of NTPC

2203. SHRIMATI N.P DURGA. Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NTPC has taken up a 500 MW coal-based thermal project at Trincomalee in Sri Lanka recently;

(b) if so, the details of the project;

(c) whether NTPC has taken up any other power project in other countries of the world;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether it is also a fact that there is some problem in selecting the site, environmental clearance, etc. in Trincomalee; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and how NTPC is planning to go ahead?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) NTPC Ltd. proposes to set up a coal based power plant in Trincomalee area in Sri Lanka, and has signed a Memorandum of Agreement fMoA) with Government of Sri Lanka and Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) on 29.12.2006 to set up a 2x250 MW power plant through a joint venture Company with CEB on 50:50 basis.

(c) and (d) NTPC Ltd. is also exploring the possibilities of mutual cooperation in power sector with Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), which amongst other includes the proposal to set up Coal/Gas based power projects in Nigeria by NTPC Ltd.

(e) and (f) Subsequent to signing of MoA, a team from NTPC Ltd. visited Sri Lanka in January, 2007 and collected necessary details of alternative sites with a view to select suitable site.

Merchant Power Plants

2204. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) how far the proposed Merchant Power Plants, where a capacity of 12,000 MW is envisaged, would be able to meet the target, especially in view of prevailing red-tapism;

(b) if so, whether the power produced by them will form part of national grid or each plant wiil have full distribution rights also; and

(c) if so, whether Government will exercise the price control mutually acceptable and interest of economically weaker sections will be safeguarded?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) In order to facilitate the development of electricity markets, the Ministry of Power has issued an approach paper and guidelines on development of Merchant Power Plants, for which coal linkage/coal blocks allotment would be available. Unlike conventional generating plant bound by take or pay Power Purchase Agreements, Merchant Power Plants compete for customers and absorb the full market risk. There are no guarantees or minimum off-take of their output. Typically, the risk of a Merchant Power